



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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LDEQ to begin Bayou Lafourche project Aug. 13

BATON ROUGE - The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality will begin a water quality project targeting the Bayou Lafourche Watershed beginning on Aug. 13. The project includes a survey of all permitted and unpermitted discharges contributing to the Bayou Lafourche Watershed.

This is pilot project for what will soon be DEQ's Clean Waters Program. The Clean Waters Program will be the state's first watershed-based inspection approach to ensure that water bodies throughout the state will meet their designated uses – such as drinking water, swimming and fishing.

The Bayou Lafourche project was brought about because DEQ's Drinking Water Protection Program found that the bayou is threatened by increased development and increased discharges into the bayou.

"The bayou is a drinking water source," said Howard Fielding, manager of the Drinking Water Protection Program. "We want to raise public and industry awareness about the water quality in the bayou and this survey will be very beneficial."

Jeff J. Dauzat, environmental staff scientist and project leader for the Bayou Lafourche project, said the project is monumental and an unprecedented effort for the department.

"This is 99 mile stretch of bayou that will be surveyed," Dauzat said. "This is important because the bayou is impaired for primary contact recreation for a variety of reasons and our goal is to ensure that the bayou meets the requirements for recreational use. The first step is to locate and document all discharges into the bayou. Also, this project will set the tone for projects statewide."